

schools, governmental services, businesses, and offices were closed. Our streets were silent, and no one dared to walk them.

"Our people were barricaded in their homes out of fear; death awaited them around every corner.

"Terrorists occupied and controlled the only hospital in the city. Their savagery reached such a level that they stuffed the corpses of children with explosives and tossed them into the streets in order to kill grieving parents attempting to retrieve the bodies of their young.

"This was the situation of our city until God prepared and delivered unto them the courageous soldiers of the Third Armored Cavalry Regiment, who liberated this city, ridding it of Zarqawi's followers after harsh fighting, killing many terrorists, and forcing the remaining butchers to flee the city like rats to the surrounding areas, where the bravery of other Third Armored Cavalry Regiment soldiers in Sinjar, Rabiah, Zumar, and Avgani finally destroyed them.

"I have met many soldiers of the Third Armored Cavalry Regiment; they are not only courageous men and women, but avenging angels sent by The God Himself to fight the evil of terrorism.

"The leaders of this Regiment, Colonel McMaster, Colonel Armstrong, Lieutenant Colonel Hickey, Lieutenant Colonel Gibson, and Lieutenant Colonel Reilly embody courage, strength, vision, and wisdom. Officers and soldiers alike bristle with the confidence and character of knights in a bygone era.

"The mission they have accomplished, by means of a unique military operation, stands among the finest military feats to date in Operation Iraqi Freedom and truly deserves to be studied in military science. This military operation was clean, with little collateral damage, despite the ferocity of the enemy. With the skill and precision of surgeons they dealt with the terrorist cancers in the city without causing unnecessary damage.

"God bless this brave Regiment; God bless the families who dedicated these brave men and women. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank the families. They have given us something we will never forget.

"To the families of those who have given their holy blood for our land, we all bow to you in reverence and to the souls of your loved ones. Their sacrifice was not in vain.

"They are not dead, but alive, and their souls hovering around us every second of every minute. They will never be forgotten for giving their precious lives. They have sacrificed that which is most valuable.

"We see them in the smile of every child and in every flower growing in this land. Let America, their families, and the world be proud of their sacrifice for humanity and life.

"Finally, no matter how much I write or speak about this brave Regi-

ment, I haven't the words to describe the courage of its officer and soldiers. I pray to God to grant happiness and health to these legendary heroes and their brave families."

Mr. Speaker, there are no words that can improve upon this letter.

#### PORT SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFazio) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFazio. Mr. Speaker, for more than a decade I have been expressing concern about our ports and our port security. Let me explain.

The United States has signed onto international agreements, consensus agreements, where we allow ships to be owned secretly and flagged under flags of convenience from countries that barely exist, Liberia, other countries, like Malta and Panama, who look at it as a way to make money, but care nothing about safety and security. And even they will freely admit they do not know who owns these ships.

Osama bin Laden may own a fleet of freighters. We are not allowed to know that, but they can sail into a U.S. port under a Liberian, Panamanian, or Maltese flag. That is a concern. We do not know who the crews are on these ships.

After an accident on my coast, where I started investigating the credentials of the Filipino captain, I found out that at an International Maritime Organization-approved school in the Philippines, which has never been visited or inspected, which does not exist; anybody, any terrorist, anybody, can buy captain's papers for about \$2,500 and they are a captain. So if Osama bin Laden owns a ship, a terrorist buys fake papers, he is now a captain on that ship.

Well, but there must be measures to secure the cargo. Well, not really. We require a manifest, a piece of paper, or in this day and age, an electronic transmission of a list of what is in the containers on that ship.

Now, that is pretty hard to phony up. But then they put these little seals on there that a 6-year-old kid could peel off and open up if the container has been inspected. It would be too expensive, \$1 to \$2 per container, to have tamper-proof seals. So we cannot have tamper-proof seals. So we do not know who owns the ships. We do not know who crews the ships, and we do not know what is on the cargo on those ships that are coming into U.S. waters.

Then we have the "thin blue line," the United States Coast Guard. Here are the concerns they raised about this UAE deal: The Coast Guard said, "There are many intelligence gaps concerning the potential for DPW or PNO assets to support terrorist operations that preclude the completion of a thorough threat assessment. The breadth of the intelligence gaps also infer potential unknown threats against a large number of potential vulnerabilities."

But then, when they were backed into a corner and their funding was probably threatened by the White House, the Coast Guard said, "The DP World's acquisition of PNO in and of itself does not pose a significant threat to U.S. assets in ports in the continental United States." Notice the qualification. "In and of itself."

The Coast Guard knows that we do not know who owns the ships. The Coast Guard knows that we do not know who crews those ships. The Coast Guard knows that we do not know what is on those ships. So they are saying this is another level of concern, this government which supported the Taliban, Mr. Khan and his nuclear proliferation, actually controlling the physical facilities. If all that other stuff was taken care of, if we knew who owned the ships, if we knew who crewed the ships, if we knew exactly what was on the ships, if it was tamper-proof sealed, then maybe you could think about this.

Now, the President says he did not know a thing about it, but he knows it was absolutely fine because all his people took care of it. You would think that that might have included the Secretary of Defense. He says he did not know a thing about it, but he knows it is just fine too. And now they say, well, we will have a review for 45 days, but we know it is just fine. We just need that time to tell people it is just fine.

This is plain and simple the Bush administration once more putting commerce, putting multinational corporate profits ahead of the safety and security of the American people. This is about a free trade deal they are negotiating with the UAE. This is about our huge and growing trade deficit where more and more foreign countries are going to be coming back here, buying up critical assets in the United States of America, because we have a totally failed trade policy under this administration.

And what do they want to do? They want to do more of it, and now they want to allow people to buy terminals in our ports and jeopardize the security of the American people.

Enough is enough. It is time to stop this madness.

#### U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my objections to the proposed United Nations Human Rights Council.

The proposal offered by the U.N. General Assembly President is a far cry